



# CAREGIVERS

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## What is Alzheimer's disease?

Article provided by the Dept. of Health & Human Services

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, irreversible disease that affects brain cells and produces memory loss and intellectual impairment in as many as 4.5 million American adults. This disease affects people of all racial, economic and educational backgrounds.

AD is the most common cause of dementia in adults. Dementia is defined as loss of memory and intellect that interferes with routine personal, social or occupational activities. Dementia is not a disease; rather, it is a group of symptoms that may accompany certain diseases or conditions. Other symptoms include changes in personality, mood or behavior.

Although AD primarily affects people age 65 or older, it may also affect people in their 50s and, although rarely, even younger. Other causes of irreversible dementia include multi-infarct dementia (a series of minor strokes resulting in widespread death of brain tissue), Pick's disease, Binswanger's disease, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), multiple sclerosis and alcohol abuse. The recommendations in this booklet deal primarily with common problems in AD, but they may also apply to any of the related dementing disorders.

### What are the Symptoms of AD?

There is no "typical" person with Alzheimer's. There is tremendous variability among people with AD in their behaviors and symptoms. At present, there is no way to predict how quickly the disease will progress in any one person or predict the exact changes that will occur. We do know, however, that many of these changes will present problems for caregivers. Therefore, knowledge and prevention are critical to safety.

People with AD have memory problems and cognitive impairment (difficulties with thinking and reasoning), and eventually they will not be able to care for themselves. They may experience confusion, loss of judgment, and difficulty finding words, finishing thoughts or following directions. They may also

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experience personality and behavior changes. For example, they may become agitated, irritable or very passive. Some may wander from home and become lost. They may not be able to tell the difference between day and night, they may wake up, get dressed, and start to leave the house in the middle of the night thinking that the day has just started. They may suffer from losses that affect vision, smell, or taste.

These disabilities are very difficult, not only for the person with AD, but for the caregiver, family and other loved ones as well. Caregivers need resources and reassurance to know that while the challenges are great, there are specific actions to take to reduce some of the safety concerns that accompany Alzheimer's disease.

### General Safety Concerns:

People with AD become increasingly unable to take care of themselves. However, individuals will move through the disease in their own unique manner. As a caregiver, you face the ongoing challenge of adapting to each change in the person's behaviors and functioning. The following general principles may be helpful.

1. **Think prevention:** it is very difficult to predict what a person with AD might do. Just because something has not yet occurred, does not mean there is no cause for concern. Even with the best-laid plan, accidents can happen. Therefore, checking the safety of your home will help you take control of some of the potential problems that may create hazardous situations.
2. **Adapt the environment:** it is more effective to change the environment than to change most behaviors. While some AD behaviors can be a less restrictive environment for the person with AD.

# Just For Caregivers

By Jose Jimenez

**Just for Caregivers** is a free telephone support service for caregivers of seniors operated by Catholic Charities. The service provides personalized education, assessment, supportive counseling and assistance with identifying resources and referrals for seniors' caregivers who live in Baltimore City or who are caring for a City resident. Just for Caregivers is located at 3320 Benson Ave., Baltimore, Maryland 21227. Tel: 410-646-6595

**Just for Caregivers** is a program of Catholic Charities, Maryland's leading non-profit provider of human services. We welcome and serve people of all faiths and races who are in need. **Just for Caregivers** is funded under the National Family Caregiver Support Program through a grant from the Baltimore City Commission on Aging and Retirement Education.

## Continued Program Eligibility

Program eligibility is limited to

- Families in which the caregiver or the care recipient is a Baltimore City resident;
- An **unpaid** caregiver of an adult who is **at least 60 years old** and needs help with two or more activities of daily living (ADL); and
- Caregivers who do not require immediate crisis intervention.

## Program goals include

- Teaching caregivers skills to manage the difficult behaviors of their loved ones;
- Reducing caregiver stress, isolation and depression;
- Increasing caregiver coping and problem-solving skills;
- Preparing a personalized plan of action for the caregiver and helping the caregiver to meet the goals in the plan; and
- Identifying the changing needs of the caregiver and adjusting the caregiver's plan to address those changing needs.
- Skills to manage the difficult behaviors of loved ones
- Reduction of caregiver stress, isolation, and depression;

- Increase caregiver coping and problem solving skills
- Help in preparing a plan of action for the caregiver and help to meet the goals of the plan
- Help with identifying changing needs and adjusting the caregiver's plan to address those changing needs

Connection with and access to additional support needs for caregivers at <http://www.catholiccharities-md.org/Seniors/seniorinformation.html>

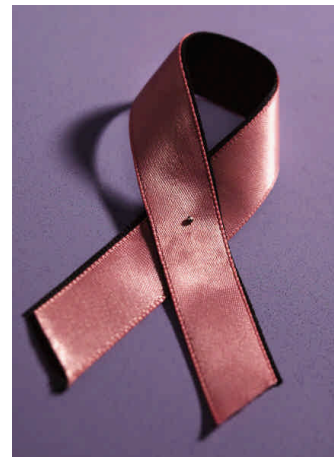
## Free Medical Services

**If you are a woman 40 years old or older and live in Baltimore City with no health insurance, you qualify for a free breast exam, mammogram and Pap smear.**

**To schedule an appointment, please call The Baltimore City Cancer Program, The Light of Hope.**

**The caregiver only has to call in to the program to do a 10 minute phone intake and schedule an appointment.**

**Tel: 410 328-4673**



***CARE: "Making a difference for Caregivers."***

## Grandparent Resources & Information



The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is often a very special one. But for a growing number of grandparents, grand parenting really means parenting a second family. Grandparents no longer have the luxury of sending the children home after a weekend visit because they are assuming the responsibility of raising the grandchildren.

Few of us plan on raising a second family. Undertaking the full-time responsibility of raising a grandchild causes major changes in a grandparent's life. A grandparent facing the demands of parenting a second time is also struggling with the family conditions that lead to the situation. In addition, this new role often includes physical, emotional, social, legal and financial challenges that were not present when grandparents raised their own children. Respite can provide much needed breathing space for grandparents, giving them time to balance caring for their grandchildren with caring for themselves.

The number of grandparent caregivers is increasing. According to the National Census Bureau, in 1996 over 1.4 million children were being raised by grandparents without the help of parents. This was an increase of 37 percent from the census of 1993. Another 2.6 million children were being raised in three-generation households headed by a grandparent, with at least one parent in the home. However, it is likely that many children in three-generation households actually are being raised by grandparents instead of parents. Such is the case, for example, when a parent addicted to drugs is in and out of the home, causing disruption and threatening to take the child but not actually being responsible for the child on a regular basis.

The phenomenon of families headed by grandparents is not unique to a particular population group or geographic area.

Grandparent caregiving is an issue for a 40-year-old grandparent as well as one who is 70 years old, for African-Americans, Caucasians, American Indians, and Latinos and for all communities, whether rural, suburban or urban. In addition, grandparent caregivers represent all socioeconomic groups. The only prerequisite is being a grandparent—and even that may not be necessary, because aunts, uncles, siblings and godparents are also raising children not their own.

The census of 1997 indicates that 33% of grandparent caregivers are under the age of 50, 48% are between the ages of 50 and 64, and 19% are over the age of 65. Forty-eight percent of the children being raised by grandparents or other relative caregivers lived in households headed by a married couple, while 46% were raised by single grandmothers or other single female relatives, and 6% were raised by grandfathers or other single male relatives.

According to 1995 census data, 13.5% of African-American children lived with their grandparents, as did 6.5% of Hispanics and 4.1% of whites. In actual numbers, 2.2 million white children lived with their grandparents, as did 1.5 African-American children and 0.6 million Hispanic children.

### Free Caregivers & Volunteer Training Class

The Baltimore City Commission on Aging and Retirement Education (CARE) National Family Caregivers Program is in the process of developing a Training Program for caregivers and volunteers. We would like to have your input and suggestions before we make our final decision on the program, curriculum and activities. The training program would be an 18-hour course to train caregivers and volunteers on different subjects, such as how to care for someone on bed rest, how to manage medication, fall prevention, fire safety, etc. The training course would be divided into 9 to 12 sessions lasting about 1 ½ hours each. At the end of the training course, you would get a certificate of completion and be entered into our trained caregivers database, which would be used for our future support program.

Please call the NFCSP at 410-396-1337 to complete a survey over the phone which will help our evaluation and determination of the training program. Your response and any comments will be treated with utmost confidentiality. After the results are tabulated and compiled, we will issue a report.

## Baltimore City Grandparents Support Groups

Name	Name of Support Group	Name/mailling address of Support Grp. contact person	Phone & fax # & e-mail address
Baltimore City	<b>Support Groups for Caregivers of Children with Special Emotional Needs</b>	<b>Families Involved Together (FIT)</b> 2219 Maryland Avenue Baltimore, MD 21218	<a href="mailto:info@familiesinvolved.org">info@familiesinvolved.org</a>
Baltimore City	<b>Grandparent Support Group (meets at Thomas Johnson Elem. School #84)</b>	c/o Kimberly Fowlkes Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries 2200 Broening Hwy, Ste. 100 Baltimore, MD 21224	410 631-0724
Baltimore City (West)	<b>Family Matters Support Group</b>	c/o Sharon McKinley Baltimore Pediatric HIV Program 2800 Maryland Avenue Baltimore, MD 21218	443 226 1577 (cell#) 410 235 7991 (fax#) <a href="mailto:bphivpfamily@aol.com">bphivpfamily@aol.com</a>
Baltimore City (East)	<b>Grandparent Support Group</b>	c/o Melissa Hackey-Arnold Kennedy Krieger Family Center 2901 W. Biddle St. Baltimore, MD 21213	443 923 5944 <a href="mailto:Hackey@kennedykrieger.org">Hackey@kennedykrieger.org</a>
Baltimore City (Downtown)	<b>Grandparent Support Group</b>	c/o Virginia Lynch Samuel Taylor Coleridge Elementary School 507 W. Preston St. Baltimore, MD 21201	410 396 0783
Baltimore City	<b>Grandparent Support Group (meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed of month, 6-7pm., can provide transportation home if grandparents live from Aisquith to Erdman to Sinclair Lane.)</b>	c/o Dorothy Livers Casey Family Services 25 N. Caroline St. Baltimore, MD 21231	410 342 7554 <a href="mailto:dlivers@caseyfamilyservices.org">dlivers@caseyfamilyservices.org</a>
Baltimore City	<b>Grandparent Support Group</b>	c/o Serena Evans Harford Heights Middle Sch. #37 1919 N. Broadway Baltimore, MD 21213	410 396 9343/4 x224
Baltimore City (East)	<b>“Just for Us” Support Group (meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat, 10a-12pm. @ 2001 E. Baltimore St, corner of Baltimore &amp; Washington St)</b>	c/o Kinship Care Resource Center of Maryland Mildred Smith & Patrice Cook 2553 W. North Ave. Baltimore, MD 21216	410 951 4177 410 255 3800 (fax#)
Baltimore City (Southwest)	<b>Grandparent Support Group Sponsor: S. Baltimore Family Health Center (meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Fri., 11a-1pm.) affiliated with Family Matters</b>	c/o Celestine Parker 631 Cherry Hill Rd Baltimore, MD 21223	410 354 0728
Baltimore City	<b>Grandparent Support Group</b>	c/o Ms. L. Woodard Dr. Carter G. Woodson Elem. Sch. 2501 Seabury Avenue Baltimore, MD 21225	410 396 1366
Baltimore City	<b>Grandparent Support Group (Yvonne Gay- THEY DO NOT HAVE A GROUP RIGHT NOW, BUT WOULD LIKE ONE)</b>	<b>Harford Heights Elem. School</b> 1919 N. Broadway Baltimore, MD 21213	410 396 9341





## Grandparent Family Connections

Grandparent family connection provides solutions to grandparents and help in the form of Advocacy, counseling, and linkages to resources. Services are free to eligible families in Baltimore city and all services are confidential. GFC work with you to identify and build on your family's strength to help you meet your needs. In addition they meet with you in your home, your child's school, or anywhere in the community... whatever works best for you and as often as needed.

For more information please contact  
410-706-3672

GFC is located at 1701 Madison Ave., 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
[www.family.umaryland.edu](http://www.family.umaryland.edu)



<http://www.baltimorecityCaregivers.org>

The National Caregivers Support Program staff is proud to announce the **Family Caregivers Support Program** is new website which provides and enhances access to information and resources that will be available to caregivers 24 hours. This new website offer caregivers the chance to download the caregivers grant application package as well as articles and publications that will provide caregivers with extra help on present issues, problems and advancement as it relates to the caregivers role. In addition, the website will also include a caregiver's forum where caregivers can present their issues and concerns about the program and any other caregivers' related matters.

## Communities of Care



Communities of Care of Maryland is dedicated to developing resources for children in Maryland who are in "out of home" placements because of abuse and neglect. We have been focusing our efforts in Baltimore City by working to develop a community of adoptive parents at Clare Courts in northeast Baltimore and working with the Baltimore City Commission on Aging and Retirement Education to develop supportive services for grandparents raising grandchildren. Communities of Care's housing facility and resource center are located in Northeast Baltimore, but services are provided citywide. Please Contact Communities of Care with any questions or concerns at 410-381-4788.

### To Contact Communities of Care of Maryland

**Phone: 410-381-4788**

**Mailing Address:**

**9347 Gentle Way**

**Columbia, MD 21045**

<http://www.communitiesofcare.org/>



If you are a grandparent 60 years or older raising your grandchildren no older than 18 years old, you could qualify to receive a one week free day camp for your child from the Druid Hill Family Branch YMCA or the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg YMCA at Stadium Place, 900 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street.

For more information, please contact The Family Caregivers Program at 410-396-1337

Baltimore City Commission on Aging & Retirement  
Education

10 N. Calvert St., Ste. 300  
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Phone:

410-396-1337

Fax:

410-244-8516

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CARE: Making a difference for  
Caregivers



**City of Baltimore**  
**Martin O'Malley, Mayor**  
**John P. Stewart, Executive Director**

**BALTIMORE BELIEVE**

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